Charles Newton



Rank: - Private

Number: - 12/1048

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 12th Bn, 'A' Coy

Killed in Action: - 10/06/1916 Age: 31 years

Cemetery: - Sucrerie Military Cemetery, Colincamps Somme, France 1.J.64

Batley Reporter, 16 Jun 1916

Family Details

Charles was born in Chester Union District in c.1884

Charles married Ellen Firth on the 25th December 1906 at Dewsbury Moor St. John's Church. He gave his address as Robert Town and was a coal miner hewer with no father named on the certificate. In 1909 he was twice at Wakefield Prison for debt and non- payment of the poor rate. From these records we know his religion was Church of England, was a miner with brown hair, five feet three inches tall and was born in the Chester Union.

In 1911 he lived with his wife and two children Annie born 1908 and Eva 1911 at 42, Back Reform Street, Dewsbury. Eva born 1907 died in November 1909 at Denaby Main.

According to newspaper reports he moved to Staincliffe and later lived at Parker's Place, Woodwell, Batley. Harry was born in 1912.

Before enlisting he worked at White Lee Colliery.

Service Details

Charles enlisted in the 12th Battalion K.O.Y.L.I. This was formed in September 1914 by the Coalminers Association they moved to Farnley Park (Otley) an in May 1915 moved to Burton Leonard (Ripon) and attached as Pioneer Battalion to 31st Division. They moved to Fovant (Hampshire) in October 1915 and in December 1915 were sent to Egypt. This was short lived as they went to France in March 1916.

Charles was killed before the Division fought at their first major battle in France which was the Battle of Albert.

A letter from Sgt.-Major C.J. McCarthy which was brought to England by Pte. James Brannan of Coach Lane, Birstall who came home on leave. The letter was dated 11th June says: -

"On behalf of "A" Company, 12th K.O.Y.L.I. (Divisional Pioneers), and especially of No. 2 Platoon to which your husband belonged, I offer you my deepest sympathy in the sad loss which has befallen you, and your dear little children. I regret to inform you that about midnight on Saturday, 10th June your husband was killed

by shrapnel whilst bravely performing his duties. His loss will be keenly felt in the company, as he was the life and soul of it, always singing and joking. We buried him this afternoon and you may feel assured that as long as I am spared and remain in this part of the country his grave will be attended to. May God, in His mercy help you through your sad troubles."

On the back of the envelope was written in pencil: -

"*Kindly have this put in the "Reporter" so that all his comrades can see it."*

Charles was awarded the 1914-15 Star. The British War Medal, 1914-18 and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Common Road Working Men's Club and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group